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POLICIES ON IMMIGRATION AND THE SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS In the European Community

Experts' report drawn up on behalf of the Commission of the European Communities

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INTRODUCTION

1. Article 8a of the EEC Treaty, which was incorporated into the Treaty of Rome by Article 13 of the Single European Act, defines the internal market as an "area without frontiers in which the free movement of ..., persons, ... is ensured".

A political declaration by the Governments of the Member States, made at the time of adoption of the Single European Act, stipulates that: "In order to promote the free movement of persons, the Member States shall cooperate, without prejudice to the powers of the Community, in particular as regards the entry, movement and residence of nationals of third countries."

The freedom of movement principle thus poses the question not only of what common system should be applied at the Community's external frontiers but also of what effects national policies towards resident immigrants may have on the Community's economic and social cohesion.

2. These concerns led the European Council of 8 and 9 December 1989 to request "that an inventory of national positions on immigration be established, to provide a basis for discussion of the matter within the Council".

To facilitate the task, the European Council's request was divided into two areas: the first entailed examination of questions relating to the entry and movement of citizens from third countries, whilst the second area related to the integration of these same people who had been admitted into the territories of the Member States.

This report is concerned mainly with the second question, viz. Member States' policies for the integration of non-EC nationals.

3. In this connection the Commission asked a group of experts¹⁾ chaired by Mr F. Braun and comprising Messrs. R. Böhning, J. Fernandez Cordon, A. Golini, W. Hyde and P.L. Remy to analyse current national policies in the following fields: - entry policy; - Member States' practices with regard to immigrants' residence and, in particular, the reuniting of families; - immigrants' access to employment; - education, housing, social benefits, civic and social rights; - dialogue between immigrants and the authorities; - repatriation facilities.
4. The group visited all the capital cities in order to meet not only politicians and administrators but also businessmen, trade unionists and immigrants' organizations. The frank and open discussions were a great help in drawing up this report.

1) see Annex II

The experts also had talks with the Coordinators' Group on the Free Movement of Persons and with both sides of Industry at Community level, represented by UNICE and the ETUC.

They are extremely grateful to everyone who contributed towards the preparation of the report by giving their expert knowledge and by making documents available.

5. Whilst the aim of this report has been to identify points of convergence and divergence between national policies without passing judgement on them, the various fields of investigation have nevertheless prompted the group to draw up a number of conclusions which may be helpful to the Member States and the Community bodies in their future decision-making.

As regards the social and legal situation of third country immigrants in the Member States, readers' attention is drawn to the Commission's report drawn up at the request of the European Council in Hannover on 27 and 28 June 1988.¹⁾

6. Finally, the experts stress that they have given a wide interpretation to the terms "immigration" and "immigrant". They have been concerned with all third country nationals living in the Member States, with the exception of those who are tourists or students, irrespective of whether they envisage returning at some future date to their own countries, e.g. on retirement, or remaining permanently. The report deals with those lawfully present, with the position of "illegal immigrants", and with those who, having entered as immigrants, subsequently acquired the citizenship of the Member State in which they were living.

Moreover, in considering the social integration of immigrants and their families, the report is concerned with immigrants themselves and with their children and grandchildren. When referring to "children", the report includes both children born outside the Member State who joined or accompanied a parent, and those born within the Member State. Thus the scope of the report does not exclude those children who acquired either at birth or later the citizenship of the Member State in which they were born. The term "second generation immigrants" is often used to describe children born to immigrants within a Member State. Objections can be made to that term, but it is used on occasion for reasons of convenience and brevity.

1) SEC(89) final of 22 June 1989

PART ONE

The context of migration and tension factors affecting migration

I. Old and new immigration

7. Large-scale transfers of people, both internal and external, have always been a feature of life in Europe. It has become a veritable crossroads of migratory flows which have made their mark on its history and have been closely linked, in modern times, to its relations with the new world and the colonies. The successive waves of immigrants and their descendants are an essential element in the fabric of European society, in the same way that European emigrants have made their own considerable contribution to the new world.
8. One of the positive aspects of immigration is that migrants are tenacious and flexible people who, in order to improve their lot, are prepared to uproot themselves, face the drawbacks and risks of travelling and settling into a new place, work hard in difficult conditions, learn a new language and take on different cultures and environments.
9. During the last thirty years in particular, the time-lags between cycles of population development and cycles of economic development in the countries which now make up the European Community gave rise first and foremost to significant migratory flows within Europe, due to a shortage of labour in the Centre and North and a surplus of labour in the South. Subsequently, the unsatisfied demand for labour in central Europe attracted immigrants from countries outside the present Community (including large numbers from Yugoslavia and Turkey). Immigration, which was initially motivated by a desire to find work and was regarded as a phenomenon of short or medium-term duration, has changed dramatically with the reunification of families and the arrival of refugees and asylum seekers. Moreover, links with former colonies have helped to establish large-scale migratory flows of a specific type, affecting mainly France and the United Kingdom. Immigration has thus become a more or less permanent or long-term phenomenon giving rise, among other things, to second and third generations of "immigrants" and creating new prospects, demands and problems which have to a certain extent overwhelmed the host societies as a result of their being slow or poorly equipped to deal with the situation.
10. Over recent years, the Community's southern Member States, which have long been countries of emigration, have become places of destination to a greater or lesser extent for legal or illegal immigration. Up to now, this has almost always involved workers not accompanied by their families. Once families begin to be reunited, a number of new problems can be expected to crop up, especially as very little seems to have been done in those countries so far to meet the challenge. Should they wish, these countries could call on the experience of the more established countries of immigration in this respect.

11. The demands of the labour market in the countries of destination and the entry rules laid down by the countries themselves (including provisions for family reunification) have largely regulated immigration, the volume and duration of immigration flows thus depending almost exclusively on the attractions of the European countries of immigration (pull factors). However, migratory flows have, over the last few years, also been determined to a certain extent by the labour markets of the countries of origin, which have exported some of the manpower that could not be employed locally (push factors); in such cases, the immigrants have resorted to various ruses (passing themselves off as students, tourists or refugees) or have taken advantage of delays and unreadiness on the part of the institutions, authorities and policy-makers in some of the countries of new immigration, whose borders are, as in the case of Italy and Greece for example, particularly permeable for structural reasons.
12. Despite the declared policy (especially on the part of the Member States of central Europe) of severely restricting the entry of foreign workers, immigration - whether authorized in accordance with the rules or simply tolerated - continues to permeate the entire European Community, with varying numbers of new arrivals, resulting primarily from family reunification and refugees and, to a lesser extent, from economic demand, with particular emphasis on the pull exerted by the underground economy. No matter what position the Member States adopt on the admission of new immigrants, there is inevitably going to be a certain flow of newcomers.
13. The political events in Eastern Europe and the resulting liberalization of movements of people have added a further dimension, not only in terms of the effect on the labour market of some Member States, but also by generating more and more applicants from the countries of Eastern Europe.

The immigrant population

14. The full integration of immigrants cannot be achieved in a single generation, and we believe we reflect both the realities of the situation and the concerns of the Governments of Member States in adopting for the purposes of this report the wide definition of "immigrant" given in para 6 above. As a consequence, it is not possible to give precise figures of the number of immigrants with whom the report is concerned.

Of a total population of 327 million in the Member States of the European Community (not taking into account the recent unification of Germany), foreigners account for some 12 800 000 or 4% of the total. This figure, though, includes Community citizens exercising their right to freedom of movement.

Thus, if we consider only those who are third-country nationals and lawfully reside on Community territory, and who are not citizens of a Member State, the foreign population can be put at some 7 900 000 - 4 300 000 men and 3 600 000 women - i.e. 2.4% of the total population.

These figures, however, exclude all those immigrants and their children who have already acquired the citizenship of a Member State. Thus, for example, the ethnic minority population of the United Kingdom, the majority of whom are British citizens, is about 4.5% of the total population, although only 1.8% of the population are non-Community nationals.

It would be wrong, though, to think that the problems of full integration concern only the non-Community nationals and not a large number of those who have already acquired citizenship of one of the Member States.

15. The total of 7 900 000 third-country nationals living in the Community includes some 1 800 000 who come from a country of the industrialized world (United States, Canada, Japan, EFTA countries, etc.). The majority of them do not regard themselves as intending to settle in Europe, nor are they seen as "immigrants" by the public at large.

They pose no integration problems needing a specific policy, and are not, generally speaking, a real concern of the Member States. Consequently, the remainder of our report is not concerned with them.

Looking only at the population of third-country nationals, the figures given in Annex I show that the majority come from Mediterranean countries (mainly Yugoslavia, Turkey, Morocco and Algeria). This bears witness to the ongoing, significant transfers of people within the Mediterranean economic and social area and the importance of the southern shores of the Mediterranean for the Community.

16. The same figures show that the majority of non-Community nationals live in three countries, France, Germany and the United Kingdom. As long-standing countries of immigration these three Member States also have the greatest number of second and third generation "immigrants" who, as we have already made clear, are of concern to us even though they are not "immigrants" in the strict sense of the word and may already possess the nationality of the country in which they live.
17. The breakdown by age and sex of the Member States' populations is quite different from that of the immigrants; the latter include vast numbers of young people with very few middle-aged or elderly people; there are also marked imbalances between the sexes, with a preponderance of male or females according to the immigrants' country of origin. The demographic differences between immigrants and the rest of the population may, together with cultural differences, constitute a further barrier to the process of integration.

18. The highly uneven geographical distribution of the immigrant population, which is concentrated above all in certain urban areas, is one of the greatest problems in terms of gaining the acceptance of the general public and finding the best solution to the question of integration. Measures to encourage a more uniform geographical distribution of immigrants may, besides preventing the formation of ghettos, facilitate the acceptance of immigrants by the local population.
19. The entire complex of problems connected with the integration of immigrants highlights the need for coherent, non-discriminatory, bold policies on the residence, education, vocational training, housing and working environment of immigrants who have already arrived. We take the view that our society cannot afford to squander, even partially, the human resources which are an intrinsic part of the Europe in which we now live.

Some immigrants choose to return to their own country, for example when they reach retirement age. This poses a general problem of eligibility for and transfer of pension rights.

20. Despite some Member States' official aid programmes to persons wishing to return to their own country, the number actually availing themselves of the opportunity is fairly low, which gives reason to believe that, particularly in the not so recent past, immigrants and their families came to the Community to stay. Although the situation is by no means consistent from country to country and over different periods of time, this phenomenon is nevertheless of some importance in terms of how we view current problems and future prospects for integration.
21. We cannot refer to the integration of immigrants already established without also considering the new inflows of migrant workers, family members, asylum seekers and illegal or clandestine immigrants, since the rate and volume of arrival of such people undoubtedly affect the integration process.

II. Tension factors affecting migration and future prospects

22. If we look back at what has happened in Europe in recent years to labour market trends and immigration flows, a gulf can be clearly distinguished between the problem as a whole (as formulated and discussed by policy-makers, public opinion and the media in the various countries and at Community level), actual or potential policies, and the turn that events have actually taken. In other words, political thinking, economic thinking and demographic and social developments are not always in step in terms of substance or timing.

23. Notwithstanding the political will to close the door to new immigrants, an "economic demand" has built up in a number of European countries in recent years, which has attracted labour to a greater or lesser extent, legitimately and clandestinely, openly and by the back door. Clandestine immigration is in itself a factor of instability and uncertainty, making it harder for bona fide immigrants to integrate and adversely affecting working conditions for all.
24. Although employers have implicitly (in their actual conduct) or explicitly (in the meetings held with the Group of Experts) stressed that - at present and for the foreseeable future - only demand for highly skilled staff is unsatisfied, they have admitted that there have been manpower shortages in a number of sectors which, with the pragmatism typical of employers, they have sought to overcome wherever labour was available and at the lowest possible cost. Highly skilled workers are needed primarily in a few areas of industry; the others are recruited for the remaining sectors, particularly the services sector and for temporary and seasonal work. In a number of cases the underground economy and clandestine immigration have fuelled each other, disturbing the labour market as a whole.
25. A first "migration-related tension factor" can thus be traced to the requirements of the labour market, its rules and the mismatch, in many European countries, between labour supply and demand both from the point of view of quantity and, perhaps above all, from the point of view of quality, and this despite the existence of an underused labour force in the Community.

Bearing in mind the high rates of unemployment among young people in almost all countries and the number of people currently not on the job market but who could be working (especially women), it is fair to say that Europe currently has a widely underused labour force and that this situation is likely to persist, at least in the short to medium term.

26. It should be emphasized that, beyond any other consideration, failure to match adequately supply and demand on the labour markets of the individual countries and of the Community as a whole will tend to strengthen the pull factors constituting a magnet for new immigration. At the same time, the more efficient the domestic labour market (where unemployment is brought down to just the frictional rate), the easier will be the acceptance of foreign workers by the population and the simpler the immigrants' integration.

27. A second "migration-related tension factor" is to be found in a socio-political context, where families are allowed to reunite, a certain number of refugees and asylum seekers are admitted and processes of political and economic development, along with production and employment rationalization, are promoted in a number of countries, particularly in Eastern Europe.

Great importance will attach not only to the decisions taken in the latter area by national governments as regards admitting further immigrants but also to the consequent political consultations to be held at Community level (concerning recognition of the right to asylum, visas and quotas) as there can be no doubt that decisions taken by one Member State will affect all the others either directly or indirectly.

28. A third "migration-related tension factor" can be traced to the demographic and social imbalances between the EC and vast areas of the rest of the world, starting from the nearest geographical regions such as Eastern Europe and the southern shores of the Mediterranean. Although it may not be possible to determine a direct, clear-cut, mechanical relationship between socio-demographic imbalances and international migration, these imbalances will probably come to play a more important role than in the past for various reasons:

- i) they are increasing rapidly (cf. the footnote to paragraph 29);
- ii) they are increasingly noticeable and noted. The media, particularly television, have an enormous and increasingly strong impact; western television is normally received both in Eastern Europe and on the southern shores of the Mediterranean, providing an easy, direct and constant means of comparing standards of living in the West and the other regions. The telephone is an equally important means of passing on information directly to those who have stayed at home, thus creating a "migratory chain" of a kind which, although it operated in the past too, did so through different channels and over a much longer timescale;
- iii) they relate to people who can now become aware more easily and fully of their human rights and their own expectations for occupational and social advancement; they are knocking at the Community's door in order to achieve such advancement (this phenomenon has more than doubled since the fall of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe);
- iv) transport is no longer any problem; it has become far easier, cheaper, more frequent and safer than in the past and accordingly encourages people to move from place to place at very limited cost and much more rapidly;
- v) in a number of Community countries the volume of air, sea and land traffic has become so intense that it is now objectively much more difficult than in other countries to check arrivals and transit.

29. Immigrants have come to Europe from many parts of the developing world - including the Indian Sub-continent, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Nigeria, etc. - and much of what is said above has a wider application. It is nevertheless worth looking more particularly to the demographic and labour market aspects of the Community of 12 and the 14 countries on the southern shores of the Mediterranean. The table of anticipated changes between 1990 and 2000 shows very marked differences (1).

Of the expected population increase in Europe and the Mediterranean between 1990 and 2000, 95% will be located on the southern shores of the Mediterranean and 5% in the European Community. There is virtually no uncertainty about this outlook: in 1990 the proportion of persons under 15 out of the total population is about 18.5% in the EC against 37.5% in the southern Mediterranean, with obvious repercussions on the birthrate and the rate of newcomers to the labour market.

(1)

Population and labour force: situation in 1990
and expected increase
during the years 1990-2000 (in millions)

	EC			Southern Mediterranean (a)		
	Value 1990	Increase million %		Value 1990	Increase million %	
Population						
- total	340.5	+ 2.4	+ 0.7	245.0	+ 49.6	+ 20.2
- in major cities (b)	40.6	+ 1.8	+ 4.3	30.4	+ 11.7	+ 38.5
Labour force						
- total	153.3	+ 1.5	+ 1.0	82.4	+ 22.4	+ 27.2
- non-agricultural	144.1	+ 4.6	+ 3.2	51.1	+ 21.7	+ 42.4

(a) - Yugoslavia, Albania, Malta, Turkey, Cyprus, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Egypt, Sudan, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco.

(b) - The capitals, with the exception of Germany (East Berlin + West Berlin) and Morocco (Casablanca).

Sources: - total population: UN forecasts, 1989 (low variant)
- population in major cities: UN forecasts, 1989
- labour force: UN + ILO forecasts, 1988.

30. The average annual increase in the labour force in the non-agricultural sectors is estimated at 460 000 for the Community as a whole and 2 170 000 for the southern shores of the Mediterranean. Turkey and Egypt alone would need to create 880 000 new jobs each year for ten years to cope with the additional supply of labour.
31. It therefore needs to be stressed, beyond any other consideration, that the smaller the labour force that the southern Mediterranean (and more generally the southern world) can absorb, the stronger will be the social tensions, the political pressures and the drive to push out additional new emigrants, who will be bound to turn to Europe as their preferred destination, whether through lawful migration, back-door entry or clandestine migration.

Furthermore, we must bear in mind that political situations adverse to emigration could be created in the southern Mediterranean, for example by the growth of Islamic fundamentalism in certain countries; on the other hand, such growth might well, in the short term, stimulate the departure of those groups of people who neither appreciate nor accept religious fundamentalism and, in the long term, add to demographic growth.

32. Demographic pressure from poor countries remains without doubt one of the major problems of our times and its consequences extend far beyond the scope of migration. Neither an increase in influx nor the complete opening of frontiers can be regarded as remedies for excessive population growth.

The basic overall solution, albeit long-term, will lie in an expansion, in terms of both volume and quality, of forms of development cooperation with these countries and concerted assistance in any programmes they may have to control demographic growth. The common management of migratory flows in the short to medium term may also be considered as one of the components of an overall cooperation policy.

III. The introduction of the Single European Market: expectations, prospects, problems

33. The immediate and most significant effects of the forthcoming entry into force of the single market should include a speeding up of the processes of economic, social and also political integration and inter-action between peoples and States.

The changes in rules and regulations and the new European status, expressed through the single market, constitute a formidable pull factor in psychological and behavioural terms, leading directly and indirectly to substantial innovations in many fields and under many aspects.

At all events, this integration and inter-action could provide the driving force to develop further the mobility of persons, both occupational and geographical, which is already substantial and on the increase, in every country; the "Market" will enhance the social and demographic processes which are already well established in western societies. Ensuring genuine occupational and geographical mobility could therefore turn out to be one of the Community's major problems resulting from the single market.

34. In giving rise to fresh, intense awareness of the actual circumstances and unity of the "new" Europe, the single market fuels (and this has also been heard at some of our meetings) expectations within the European Community for greater equity and improved living and working conditions for people on the margins, both nationals and immigrants. The European spirit and Community action is counted on to encourage the various national governments to greater and above all more effective commitment to reducing the drawbacks and inequalities experienced by the poor, the marginalized and immigrants. This could also raise the expectations of the currently underused European labour force for a more rapid and appropriate integration or re-integration into the productive sphere.
35. Expectations outside the European Community are also on the increase, both in Eastern Europe and the southern Mediterranean as evidenced by requests for accession to the Community, both immediately and in the future. The Community is admired not only for its political and economic potential, but also as a community of peoples with a great tradition and cultural force who heed the problems of the rest of the world. Third countries look to the Community for hope and confidence in more rapid growth and a less uncertain emergence from backwardness and economic underdevelopment.
36. In the context of the EC in 1993, over and above any political decision that may be taken about freedom of movement for non-Community nationals (those who have not yet acquired citizenship, of course), provision must be made for an increase in their mobility related to opportunities in employment and in vocational and social advancement, which may arise in various Member States. In so far as internal frontiers are abolished by the single market, the conduct or the problems (e.g. permeable frontiers) of an individual Member State as regards immigration will also become a matter for all the Member States.

PART TWO

Integration issues and elements of integration policy

1. Integration issues

Integration or what else ?

37. In theory at least, countries can choose between leaving the immigrants to themselves and integrating or assimilating them. Western European countries are densely populated societies crammed into limited living spaces where foreigners are perceived not as newcomers who will somehow find their niche but as unwelcome additions who will compete for scarce jobs and housing. On the other hand, immigrant workers are part of Western economies, to which they make an important contribution. If today's immigrants were left to fend for themselves they would continue to occupy the bottom rungs of society permanently and without the chance of leaving them or even being replaced by subsequent waves of immigrants. The larger surrounding society turns hostile, develops rejection and stigmatization mechanisms and resorts to uncivilized policing, thus reinforcing the vicious circle of exclusion breeding marginality.

The immigrants in contemporary Western Europe are of different ethnic composition than their host societies and they are sizeable in numbers or will become sizeable sooner or later. The interplay of numerical importance and foreign origin - even where the children of immigrants are naturalized citizens - does not permit European countries to regard with equanimity a situation which fosters social tensions, which nurtures festering ethnic conflicts and which saps democratic traditions and freedoms.

38. The alternative to neglect is integration. Integration is inescapable as a policy if we are setting out to defuse the tensions inherent in the immigration of generally poor, inadequately equipped and ethnically different people. Whatever precise meaning may be attached to this term in a particular context, its general meaning is clear: be one of us socially, economically and, at least in a rudimentary sense, politically.

We therefore conceive of integration like the many policy-makers, academics and representatives of immigrants who have weighed up its implications and alternatives, that is to say as a process which prevents or counteracts the social marginalization of immigrants. Understood in this way, integration leaves aside the somewhat heated but sterile debate on assimilation versus multiculturalism. Social integration is necessary even where assimilationist policies are pursued. Social integration is also necessary under a multicultural, intercultural or ethnic minority perspective.

39. Integration derives its social legitimation from Western Europe's fundamental value of solidarity with the poor. It derives its political legitimation from our humanitarian tenet of equality of treatment. It derives its economic justification from the benefits societies reap from members who are fully productive. Migrants are enterprising people, as are their offspring. The mobilization of their labour force potential would, in certain cases, enable our countries to satisfy labour demand without recourse to non-nationals abroad. Incidentally, integration policies effectively pursued will tend to reduce the underground economy.

Lest it be unclear, we believe that integration policies have to be comprehensive in the sense that they cannot be confined only to people who have lived five, ten or more years in our societies. They have to be aimed as well at those new entrants - be they workers, family members or refugees - who are admitted without limit of time or who, if subject to limited-time permits, can reasonably be expected to become long-term residents.

40. Integration must not take the same form for all, if only because the receiving countries are not the same in social terms. The aim of integration must be to eliminate legal, cultural, language and other obstacles so as to enable immigrants to live in the same way as those people in the host country to which they feel most akin in social terms.
41. The social situation of immigrants is such that they will benefit from the general integration policies aimed at the most disadvantaged sections of society. These policies would, however, need to be supplemented by specific measures taking account of the particular characteristics of immigrants. For instance, improved housing for immigrants will normally be part and parcel of general rehabilitation measures (unless special funds are available). By contrast, language teaching will almost always require special measures for foreigners. To facilitate the immigrants' children's transition from school to work, it may be necessary in one country but not in another to design special measures for that target group.

What is the situation today ?

42. Both labour immigrants and the growing number of settled refugees occupy the bottom rungs of our societies, individual exceptions notwithstanding. They constitute disadvantaged populations or, more precisely, populations at risk. They are constantly at the risk of unemployment, of having to accept the worst housing, of encountering disproportionate difficulties at school and in formal training situations, in short of being down-and-out and remaining so.